

**Governor's Upper Yellowstone River Task Force**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**February 27, 2001**  
**Yellowstone Inn**  
**Meeting began at 7:00 p.m.**

**I. Introduction**

**Members Present:**

|                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| John Bailey, Chair | David Haug    |
| Roy Aserlind       | Bob Wiltshire |
| Michelle Goodwine  | Jim Woodhull  |

**Others Present:**

|                                      |                        |                    |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Allan Steinle, Ex-Officio            | Pete Story             | Mary Louise Polzin |
| Joel Tohtz, Ex-Officio               | Jeanne-Marie Souvigney | Tom Pick           |
| Tom Olliff, Ex-Officio               | Karl Biastoch          | Burt Williams      |
| John Logan, Ex-Officio               | Jim Robinson           | Denine Schmitz     |
| Laurence Siroky, Ex-Officio          | Jen Elliot             | Duncan Patten      |
| Dean Yashan, Ex-Officio              | Abigail Dillen         | Paul Hook          |
| Liz Galli-Noble, Coordinator         | Stan Todd              | David Potter       |
| Amy Miller, Administrative Secretary | Mike Merigliano        | Tom Hallin         |

**II. Prior Meeting Minutes**

The January 16, 2001 minutes were approved as written.

**III. Financial Updates**

**1. Grant Spending Report:**

Amy Miller reported the following to the Task Force:

| <i><b>EXPENDED GRANTS</b></i>              |                  |               |                                       |
|--|------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Grant Name</b>                          | <b>Completed</b> | <b>Amount</b> | <b>Study Component</b>                |
| DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant   | 6-30-99          | 2,100.00      | Physical Features Inventory           |
| DNRC HB223 Grant                           | 7-30-99          | 10,000.00     | Aerial Photography                    |
| DNRC Riparian/Wetlands Educational Grant   | 6-30-00          | 960.99        | Hydrologic Response to the 1988 Fires |
| DEQ Grant (319 1 <sup>st</sup> )           | 9-30-00          | 40,000.00     | Coordinator Position                  |
| DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant   | 1-31-01          | 10,000.00     | Watershed Land Use Study              |
| <i><b>CURRENT GRANTS</b></i>               |                  |               |                                       |
| <b>Grant Name</b>                          | <b>Amount</b>    | <b>Spent</b>  | <b>Remaining Balance</b>              |
| DEQ Start-Up Grant                         | 49,138.00        | 27,712.00     | 21,426.00                             |
| DNRC RDGP Grant                            | 299,940.00       | 200,256.77    | 99,683.23                             |
| DEQ 319 Grant (2 <sup>nd</sup> )           | 58,000.00        | 8,705.16      | 49,294.84                             |
| DNRC HB223 (Riparian Trend Analysis Study) | 6,500.00         | 1,684.96      | 4,815.04                              |

**2. Funding Updates**

Liz Galli-Noble reported that the BLM officially announced that the Task Force will receive \$10,000 in grant funding from the Federal Unified Watershed Approach Program within a month. The funding will go through the Park Conservation District and will be used for either the Socio-Economic Assessment or the Wildlife Study.

She also reported that the DEQ has recommended full funding for our third 319 Grant (\$44,000): submitted in August 2000. Currently, the EPA is reviewing the 319 Grant.

John Bailey requested Stuart Lehman's new address from Dean Yashan, in order to write a letter in appreciation of Stuart's effort on the Task Force. Stuart Lehman recently accepted a job with EPA in Washington D.C.

#### **IV. Research Team Presentation #4**

##### Riparian Trend Analysis

Mary Louise Polzin (PhD student working with Dr. Mike Merigliano at the University of Montana) updated the Task Force on Riparian Trend Analysis research activities. A summary of that presentation is as follows:

The riparian vegetation study reach is from Gardner to Springdale.

The main goal of our investigation is to quantify the cumulative effects of stream bank modification to the cottonwood dominated ecosystem along the Upper Yellowstone River.

Study objectives:

- (1) Establish floodplain turnover rates,
- (2) Determine fluvial events that drive channel migration and movement,
- (3) Determine magnitude and frequency of flow events associated with cottonwood recruitment,
- (4) Map channel migration,
- (5) Determine the cumulative effect of bank stabilization projects.

Brief outline of what was done last year:

The 200- to 300-year-old floodplain was delineated for full river reach. This was accomplished by distinguishing between terraces and outline using stereo pairs of air photos. The flood photos from 1997 were also used to help see the 100-year flood return stage. Some areas with a gradual slope were delineated following a field visit. The floodplain outlined on the air photos was transferred to topographical maps with a scale of 1:25,000 using a Zoom Transfer Scope. The floodplain was then transferred to GIS by digitizing the delineated floodplain from the topographical maps.

Next the study reach was broken into six strata (groups). Stratification was based on the river channel morphology (different channel types). These six different channel types were defined based on Nanson and Croke 1992 classifications, and Rosgen 1994 classifications. The three basic channel patterns (braided, meandering and straight, Leopold and Wolman 1957) were subdivided into six strata:

- 1) canyon
- 2) confined coarse textured (Nanson and Croke 1992)
- 3) wandering braided (Nanson and Croke 1992)
- 4) confined wandering braided (Nanson and Croke 1992)
- 5) entrenched (Rosgen 1994)
- 6) urbanized

In 2000, the "wandering braided" stratum was sampled. The wandering braided stratum was divided into 74.32-hectare plots (185.8 acre plots). This resulted in 33 plots for the stratum. Using a random number generator, the plots were picked and sampled going down the list. Plots 16,17,18,19,25,26,28,30 were done (although not in that order). None of the plots picked by the computer between 1 and 15 (located downstream of Livingston) were done because of denied access. Hopefully a few will be sampled this year if some landowners agree to give us access.

The next step was identifying tree patches on air photos, and then selecting individual trees to age within those patches. We attempted to get an even distribution of trees sampled over each patch. These selected trees were cored and aged. Tree establishment years will be divided into 5- to 10-year age classes to identify even aged patches.

Once age classes are marked on the air photos, mapping of the channel movement will be done. For young trees, air photos from 1948 to present will be used to bracket their establishment time intervals. We plan to do this work in 2001.

Year of establishment will also be correlated to the peak river discharge for that year. This will help link successful cottonwood recruitment years with certain river flow levels.

In 2001, the remaining five strata will be sampled. Small fixed subplots will be done within the wandering braided reach to define age structure, associated vegetation species, clonal growth patterns, and extent. In areas where there is bank modification, differences (if any) between natural and modified sections will be investigated, focusing on riparian vegetation densities, diversity, and age structure.

## **V. Socio-Economic Assessment Contractor Selection Process**

Dr. Roy Aserlind, Task Force and Socio-Economic Subcommittee member, gave a presentation on the Socio-Economic Assessment contractor selection process—from the writing of the request for proposals (RFP) to the applicant interviews and final selection. Roy thanked Liz Galli-Noble and Mike Atwood, Subcommittee Chair, for doing a great job with communications and scheduling. He also thanked Ellen Woodbury for calling references for all of the applicants and reporting to the Subcommittee.

Four proposals were received through the RFP process, and the Subcommittee chose to interview all four applicants:

- BBC Research and Consulting,
- Blankenship Consulting and SWCA,
- Garcia and Associates, and
- Watts and Associates, Inc.

The interviews were completed in two days (February 15 and 16, 2001). The evaluation and ranking of the written proposals was based on a weighted-selection criteria process (specifically stated in the RFP). There were 100 total points possible for the written proposals, which included the following factors and point breakdown:

- Contractor's proposed cost to perform the work as outlined in the Scope of Work. (25 points)
- Contractor's demonstrated knowledge/understanding of the goals of this project. (25 points)
- Responsiveness and quality of contractor's work plan. Does the work plan show that the contractor has the ability and will commit sufficient resources, to accomplish the required analyses, coordinate work with Task Force staff, and produce a quality socio-economic assessment document? (10 points)
- Adequacy and feasibility of contractor's public participation plan. Will it inform the community of the study process and issues, provide adequate opportunities for involvement, factor public concerns into the development of the study, and provide documentation of input received and how that input was utilized in the study? (10 points)
- Qualifications and availability of the key personnel and subcontractors identified in the work plan. Availability of adequate support staff and material resources. (10 points)
- Contractor's record for fulfilling the requirements of similar projects to the satisfaction of the contracting entity, and for accomplishing such projects on schedule and within budget. (10 points)
- The data collected in Phase I is presented and packaged in a format that allows for logical progression into Phase II. (10 points)

Each group interviewed was asked the same five questions (listed below). These questions addressed specific issues that Subcommittee members considered crucial. Each group was required to respond within a 45-minute time frame. Each response could be awarded 0 to 20 points, for a total of 100 points possible.

1. We are looking for an accurate “snap-shot” of existing socio-economic conditions, how familiar are you with existing databases? How well is your firm equipped to tap into these databases.
2. Is a survey(s) really necessary? If so, what method(s) of survey would be most effective given our limited budget and assessment goals?
3. What types of statistical and non-statistical reporting will you be using (numerical data, percentage data, comparative data, etc.)? How does this apply when presenting trends? Do you plan to report your data in a GIS format?
4. Are you willing to guarantee completion of this project within our agreed upon time frame (that is by October 31, 2001) with the understanding that payment will be tiered to a completion schedule?
5. The Task Force is very concerned that we receive an accurate, balanced, and objective report that will withstand outside scrutiny. Can you have us examples of similar projects that you have done that demonstrate an objective outlook on the part of your firm (that is, no preconceived notions or desired outcome in mind)?

Roy Aserlind then gave a brief overview of issues that the Subcommittee has considered and addressed during their development of the Socio-Economic Assessment over the past year. He presented the following slides to stress specific points:

- (1) “Without the science information, the public dialogue often deteriorates into a dogmatic debate among divergent and often mutually exclusive positions driven by self-interest”.  
Tom Mills, Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project
- (2) So, What Do You Think About the Yellowstone River?  
Sample Viewpoints  
Potential Stakeholders  
Economic Groups, Demographic Categories, and Government
- (3) Survey Overview
- (4) Understanding River Management Essential to the Phase I Socioeconomic Assessment

Final Selection—Based on point totals for their written proposal and interview, the Subcommittee selected BBC Research and Consulting as its first choice for the Socio-Economic Assessment contract. Watts and Associates, Inc. ranked second. Roy Aserlind explained that the process was standardized for fairness.

**Bob Wiltshire made a motion to approve the Subcommittee’s first choice of BBC Research and Consulting for the Socio-Economic Assessment contract. The Subcommittee was also given the authority from the Task Force to proceed with further budget negotiations, but that amount could not to exceed BBC’s originally submitted budget amount of \$97,540. If the Subcommittee could not reach an agreement with BBC, then they had the authority to move on to their second choice of Watts and Associates, Inc.. Michelle Goodwine seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

John Bailey stated that the Task Force was very appreciative of all the time and hard work that the Subcommittee has contributed to this socio-economic process.

## VI. Outreach and Education Activities Updates

### *(1) March 3, 2001 Workshop Update*

Liz Galli-Noble reminded the Task Force and public of the upcoming landowner workshop scheduled for March 3, 2001 at the Yellowstone Inn. The workshop will held from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm; lunch will be provided.

Liz Galli-Noble thanked Rod Siring, Tom Hallin, and Jerry O'Hair, who helped in the development of all aspects of the workshop. Liz also thanked Jen Elliot and the Montana Watercourse for her involvement in the workshop. Jen assisted in the development of the agenda and letters, mailed 350 letters of invitation to landowners, created and helped distribute the poster, and provided much-needed funding for the event.

### *(2) April/May Demonstration Workshop Update*

Liz met with Rod Siring, Andy Dana, and Tom Hallin on February 26 to select a date and develop an draft agenda for a second Landowner Workshop (copies provided). This workshop would be a follow-up to the March 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop, which would allow landowners and members of the public to see demonstrations of how Task Force research teams collect data.

Two possible dates selected are: Saturday, April 28, 2001 or May 5, 2001. Liz is hoping to hear back from research teams as to their availability on those dates. It was suggested that workshop demonstrations be conducted on public property (for example at fishing accesses). Liz anticipates that the only major expenses would be transportation from site to site, and lunch for the participants (something very simple such as sandwiches).

Jen Elliot, Montana Watercourse, offered to look into the possibility of helping to fund this second workshop. She explained that the March 3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop may come in under budget, and if so that could be used for the Demonstration Workshop.

Tom Olliff, Yellowstone National Park, also offered to look into the possibility of using one of their buses for workshop participant transportation.

**Bob Wiltshire made a motion to authorize up to \$500 from the Start-Up Grant for "gaps" in funding for this second Demonstration Workshop. Dave Haug seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

The Task Force gave Liz Galli-Noble authorization to choose between the two dates.

### *(3) Cumulative Effects Presentation of NAQWA Conference*

The Task Force has been asked to give a presentation at the NAQWA Conference in Red Lodge on March 14, 2001. Liz will attend the conference and give the Task Force presentation.

### *(4) Montana Watershed Coordination Council Presentation (MWCC)*

The Task Force has been asked to give a presentation at the MWCC meeting in Helena on April 11, 2001. The meeting focus is "Watershed Groups & Fires, Floods, Feds & other Friends". John Bailey has agreed to lead the presentation. Allan Steinle (Corps/Task Force member), the Park Conservation District, and Liz Galli-Noble will also attend the meeting and help present where needed.

(5) John Bailey will be giving a Task Force presentation to the Billings Trout Unlimited Chapter on March 6, 2001.

**VII. TAC Update**

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting was held on February 9, 2001 in Bozeman. The meeting minutes will be given to the Task Force. These meetings are a way for TAC members and researcher team leaders to communicate.

The Corps Omaha District was unable to attend the February 9, 2001 meeting, so an abbreviated TAC meeting will be held on March 2, 2001 in Bozeman.

**VIII. Schedule Future Task Force Meetings**

Liz Galli-Noble requests that Task Force members call her at #222-3701, if they will be unable to attend scheduled meetings.

THERE WILL BE NO TASK FORCE MEETING IN MARCH 2001.

Next Task Force meeting is:  
Tuesday, April 26, 2001 at the Yellowstone Inn.

**IX. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.**